

ISAC Meeting – May 2014

ACTION OR INFORMATION ITEM

SPONSOR (Name/Email): Nathan Stone nstone@uaex.edu

TOPIC: Using Non-Native Species in Shellfish Culture and the Challenge of an “Invasive Species” Label

SPEAKER (Name/Email): Diane Cooper, Taylor Shellfish, DianeC@taylorshellfish.com

1. DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM:

Policy discussion to address the issue of using non-native shellfish species in continued farm production in the face of increasing challenges relative to regulatory confusion over the terms “non-native” and “invasive.” Proposed topic will include historic and current context of the issue, examples of the challenges of using non-native species (particularly in food production) in light of invasive species awareness, and recommended solution.

2. WHY IS THIS ITEM IMPORTANT TO NISC / ISAC? HOW IS IT RELATED TO THE NATIONAL INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT PLAN?

Executive Order 13112 clearly mandates Federal agencies to coordinate and cooperate with other levels of government, tribes, and other stakeholders through the implementation of a National Invasive Species Management Plan (NMP). It also established a National Invasive Species Council (NISC) to accomplish the work. NISC plays the key role in ensuring the coordination strategies on invasive species management, as identified in the NMP, are fully implemented. In the 2008-2012 NMP, Strategic Goal 5, Organization Collaboration, it states, “*Maximize organizational effectiveness and collaboration on invasive species issues among international, federal, state, local and tribal governments, private organizations and individuals.*” Embedded in the goal description are a number of objectives, which if fully implemented, would help improve knowledge and understanding of legal and regulatory tools relative to invasive species, expand coordination for leveraging resources when addressing invasives species issues, and enhance and improve regulatory processes on invasive species.

The on-going debate over the meaning and use of the terms, “invasive species” and “non-native species” is as relevant and challenging today as it was when first introduced as an ISAC agenda item over a decade ago in 2003.

The current definition of an invasive species, as expressed in the 2008-2012 NMP is “*an alien species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.*” Guiding principles adopted in the NMP provide context for the use of “invasive species” terminology and state, “*many alien species are non-invasive and support human livelihoods or a preferred quality of life.*” This definition articulated in the NMP along with its clarifying context and guiding principles, is not consistently used by other federal, regional, or state agencies particularly when developing new rules or setting policy. These are opportune times for NISC engagement and

coordination. Our industries are harmed through inconsistent policy and rule-making and subsequent litigation as courts try to sort out invasive species terminology and its regulatory meaning.

It is our position that the issue of invasive species terminology and definitions, first introduced in 2003, should not be considered complete. As with many other ISAC actions and recommendations, it requires an on-going effort and a sustained federal response to ensure full implementation of the goal. It is not efficient or effective for regions, states, and local jurisdictions and other organizations to create from whole cloth new definitions or strategies on invasive species.

3. PREVIOUS ACTIONS TAKEN BY NISC / ISAC ON THIS ITEM:

This item has been discussed and acted upon by previous ISACs. First presented to the ISAC Steering Group, July 23, 2003 as an action item for ISAC; discussed at subsequent meetings followed by development of a Definitions Sub-Committee and development of the Invasive Species Definition Clarification and Guidance White Paper; and submitted as a recommendation action to NISC in a memo dated May 19, 2008.

4. ACTION REQUESTED OF NISC / ISAC:

Renewed effort by NISC through ISAC recommendation process to ensure previous efforts and actions are tracked through time to document progress or lack of progress. Develop and implement bureaucratic adaptive management strategies.

5. ALTERNATIVES: None.

6. ATTACHMENTS: Notes from Teleconference of the ISAC Steering Group, July 23, 2003

Invasive Species Definition Clarification and Guidance White Paper,
Definitions Subcommittee of the ISAC, April 27, 2006

Recommendations to NISC from the ISAC Meeting held April 27-28, 2006,
May 19, 2006